

Central Intelligence Agency

ER 84-2301/1



Washington, D.C. 20505

24 May 1984

STAT

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Robert M. Kimmitt  
Executive Secretary, National Security Council

SUBJECT: Comments on Three White House Digests

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum dated 24 May 1984, Same Subject

A review of the three White House Digests forwarded by reference indicates that the following comments previously forwarded by us have not been incorporated into the new drafts:

- What Central Americans Are Saying About Central America  
Page 3, Lines 1, 2, and 3 change statement in parenthesis to read, "(the FPL, one of the largest of the five separate insurgent groups that make up the Faribundo Marti Liberation Front, or FMLN)". So far as their being united is concerned, guerilla unity still remains elusive for the insurgent factions.
- Sandinista Repressions of Trade Unions and Employer Groups  
Page 3, first full paragraph insert "International" after "Amnesty".

Page 5, second full paragraph, instead of "new Communist leadership in Nicaragua," put "new Marxist-Leninist leadership in Nicaragua."

Executive Secretary

STAT

cc: Mr. Charles Hill  
Executive Secretary  
Department of State

Col. John H. Stanford  
Executive Secretary  
Department of Defense

TBC:kac [ ] 24 May 84)

Distribution:

Original - Addressee

ER Chrono

C-387

STAT  
EXEC

3789

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

VIA LDX

May 24, 1984

Executive Registry
84 - 2301

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. CHARLES HILL  
Executive Secretary  
Department of State

COL (P) JOHN STANFORD  
Executive Secretary  
Department of Defense

MR. THOMAS B. CORMACK  
Executive Secretary  
Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: Three White House Digests

The attached three White House Digests:

- (1) "What Central Americans are Saying About Central America;"
- (2) "What the Sandinistas Say About Sandinismo;"
- (3) "Nicaraguan Repression of Trade Union and Employer Groups;"

were submitted to your agency for informal clearance/review.  
Your comments, suggestions are reflected in this draft, which  
is being submitted to your agency for final clearance/review.

Please provide your comments by May 29.

*Robert M. Kimmitt*  
Robert M. Kimmitt  
Executive Secretary

Attachments

Three White House Digests

STAT

STAT

STAT

## **WHAT CENTRAL AMERICANS ARE SAYING ABOUT CENTRAL AMERICA**

**"If the Salvadoran guerrillas had popular support, they would already have won by now."**

**Magr. Arturo Rivas y Damas  
Archbishop of San Salvador**

Many North Americans have commented on and written about Central America. Many of our important strategic and economic interests are bound up in the area. Beyond this, most Americans profess a sincere desire to see peace and democracy come at last to the people of the region.

But in the course of this debate, the voices of Central Americans themselves have sometimes been drowned out by the din of liberal and conservative, partisan and bipartisan views continuously aired in the U.S.

### **THE SOVIET ROLE**

President Roberto Suazo Cordova recently described Central America as a region of economic inequality with a history of violent solutions to political and social problems. This inequality and the legacy of this history are being exploited by dedicated Marxist-Leninists aided by outside powers, namely Cuba and the Soviet Union.

The Soviets, while able to find willing accomplices in many parts of Central America, are feared and mistrusted by most Central Americans. Besides the traditional wariness of interference in this hemisphere by extra-hemispheric powers, there is also discomfort with the element of Communism.

Carlos Rangel, a well-respected intellectual from Venezuela (one of the Contadora countries trying to mediate the Central American conflicts) had this to say about the nature of Communism:

**"The Communist Empire will remain aggressive as long as a non-Communist country exists. Communist government is not interested in coexistence. It needs to expand. It needs to annihilate those enemies it creates on its borders as soon as it gains power."**

Former Costa Rican Foreign Minister Fernando do Volio commented in July of last year on the Soviet presence:

**"I am extremely puzzled about the great international commotion over U.S. fleet maneuvers in Central**

American waters, since nothing is being said by the same international community about these 14 [Soviet] ships and other ships that have arrived in Nicaragua over many years - 4 years - with war materiel. This has altered the military balance and created an international communist threat to the Marxist-Leninists. Their behavior proves it."<sup>5</sup>

#### SUPPORT FOR OTHER TERRORIST MOVEMENTS

If this were confined to Nicaragua, the problem would be serious enough. Unfortunately, the Sandinista leadership has, in a number of public statements, indicated its intention to export its revolution, the revolution former Sandinistas say was stolen from the Nicaraguan people. Consider the following from Interior Minister Tomas Borge:

"This revolution goes beyond our borders. Our revolution was always internationalist from the moment Sandino fought in La Segovia."<sup>6</sup>

Eduardo Ulibarri, editor in chief of La Nacion, Costa Rica's largest daily, commenting on the work of the Contadora Group, said that its members (Colombia, Venezuela, Panama and Mexico)

"have been very reluctant to come to grips with two important factors in this regional ideological struggle: the nature of the Nicaraguan regime and the Soviet-Cuban intervention in the area -- either through military and civilian advisers in Nicaragua or through the organizing, supplying and controlling of local surrogates devoted to Marxist-Leninist control."

Journalist Michael Kramer quoted two Sandinistas in the New York Magazine:

"Those who dismiss the Sandinistas' extraterritorial revolution rhetoric are deluding themselves. When Comandante Bayardo Arce says 'We will never give up supporting our brothers in El Salvador,' he means it. And Sandinista defense minister Humberto Ortega is equally serious when he says: 'Of course we are not ashamed to be helping El Salvador. We would like to help all revolutions.' In practice, such words have translated into supplying the Salvadoran guerrillas with whatever they need. (And the guerrilla high command operates from a headquarters in Managua)"<sup>7</sup>

Finally, the FSLN prepared a pamphlet commemorating the 16th anniversary of the death of Che Guevarra which read in part:

"For us Sandinistas evoking Che Guevarra is to keep in mind the projection without frontiers of the revolutionary, of the internationalist."

#### COMMENTS FROM THE SALVADORAN REBELS

The attempt to imitate the Nicaraguan revolution is being made in El Salvador. Cayetano Carpio, the late commander of the

Popular Liberation Front (the FPL, one of five movements unit<sup>STAT</sup> at Fidel Castro's insistence to form the Faribundo Marti Liberation Front, or FMLN) echoed the theme of region-wide revolution when he said:

"The Central American peoples' struggle is one single struggle ... All the Central American nations will become one single revolutionary fire if U.S. imperialism carries out its aggressive plans against Nicaragua and El Salvador."<sup>10</sup>

Carpio has been repudiated by his erstwhile colleagues since his mysterious suicide, but he was described last December in a recent FPL communique as a:

"genuine representative of the Salvadoran patriots who ... undertook the difficult work of providing the Salvadoran people with an authentic political/military, Marxist-Leninist vanguard to lead them in the struggle to destroy capitalism and establish socialism through the strategy of a prolonged peoples' war."<sup>11</sup>

No criticism of the goals of the guerrillas reads as clearly nor condemns as severely as their own words.

The anti-U.S. nature of the FMLN is also apparent from their words. Ruben Zamora, political representative of the FMLN, had this to say on the slaying of Lt. Commander Albert Schaufelberger by a left-wing death squad. Zamora was speaking at a meeting sponsored by the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) last June 21:

"[The FMLN takes] full responsibility for the death of Lt. Commander Schaufelberger, who was carrying a machine gun in one hand and a walkie-talkie in the other ... We can't guarantee that this won't happen again."

By offering aid to the guerrillas of El Salvador, Nicaragua violates one of the most respected principles of the Inter-American system, that of non-intervention. President Alvaro Magana of El Salvador reports:

"Armed subversion has but one launching pad: Nicaragua. ... While Managua draws the world's attention by saying that for two years they have been on the verge of being invaded, they have not ceased for one instant to invade our country."<sup>12</sup>

## EFFECTS OF "REVOLUTIONARY" VIOLENCE

### Nicaragua

The people of Central America speak eloquently in describing the effects of revolution on their daily lives. Eden Pastora expressed his frustration at what happened to the democratic revolution he helped lead:

"Peace in Central America is inextricably linked to Nicaragua. There can be no peace in Central America if

there is no internal peace in Nicaragua. There can be no peace in Nicaragua as long as the slaughter of the Miskitos, Sumos and Ramas continues; as long as there is no freedom of the press; and as long as the occupation by Cuban, German, Soviet and Bulgarian troops continues. This is what we resent in these nine commanders. We were the only people in the world capable of practicing non-alignment, because we made our revolution in the 20th century supported in the first two years by \$1.2 billion in aid from around the world. We got help from everyone: from the Gringos, Germans, Russians, French, Spanish, Swedes, Norwegians 2-- from all of Europe, Africa and the Arab World... We could have practiced polydependency in order to avoid falling into a dependency on one of the two superpowers... We lost the chance no other people in the world had: The chance to make a true revolution, genuine, the prototype of a Latin American revolution."<sup>13</sup>

A number of minority groups in the country have undergone severe repression since 1979. Among these groups is the Miskito Indian population. A recently declared amnesty plan for Miskitos who have fled Sandinista repression met with this reaction from Enrique Bolanos:

"The [Miskito amnesty decree] is discriminatory. It is welcome for the Miskitos because they deserve it, but it does not include others. This decree would seem to have been made by a country like South Africa."<sup>14</sup>

Even flight to democratic Honduras is no guarantee of safety for the Miskito, Sumo and Rama Indians. On January 12, 1984, well after the amnesty offered for self-exiled Indians, the Honduran government "addressed the Nicaraguan government again ... to strongly protest the persecution, abuse and killing of Miskito residents in Honduras' Mosquita territory."<sup>15</sup>

The note was in response to a January 3 incident in which Sandinista troops crossed the border and entered the Honduran town of Quihaustara to force Miskito refugees to return to Nicaragua. This operation is itself testimony to the ineffectiveness of the amnesty.

There is other testimony as well. The Christmas Exodus of over 1,000 Miskito Indians, who left the country following their Bishop, Salvador Schlaefter, and the flight of hundreds more in April 1984 contrast sharply with Sandinista claims that there is no Indian persecution.

The Miskito Indians and many other Nicaraguans face persecution in spite of the fact that they resisted the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. The revolution that overthrew Somoza was broad-based and democratic. Unfortunately for the people of Nicaragua, the Marxist-Leninist element of the coalition became dominant.

Since the rise of this Marxist-Leninist faction, which includes the nine "comandantes" who hold power, many Nicaraguans who have refused to cooperate with the Sandinista regime have been harassed, arrested, and in some cases, tortured. Some have lost jobs, and other have difficulty obtaining ration cards. A Nicaraguan citizen reported the following in March, 1983:

"We all have to join [the Sandinista Defense Committees]. If you don't, they call you a contra, their term for a counterrevolutionary, and you don't get an identification card to buy basic foods at cheap prices."<sup>16</sup>

The Nicaraguan press is censored, rights to habeas corpus and assembly have been curtailed, and free labor unions have had their leaders harassed and their activities restricted. These restrictions include even those who risked their lives in the fight against Somoza.

Nicaraguan poet Pablo Antonio Cuadra also worked for democracy in Nicaragua and opposed Somoza. Now, four years after the Triumph, he is:

"against the perversion of the Revolution which they have engineered ... My obligation as a poet is to hold up the banner of resistance against the tremendous damage which is being done to Nicaraguan culture."<sup>17</sup>

The behavior of the Sandinists would seem to indicate not only a lack of trust in the Nicaraguan people, as evidenced by their attempts to manipulate the 1985 election process, but a genuine fear of democracy. Cuadra commented on this as well:

"I am excluded and isolated just as anyone who suggests an independent point of view or who defends the independence of the writer in the face of the power of the state."<sup>18</sup>

This fear extends beyond their borders. To quote Rangel again: "Democracy in Costa Rica cannot be accepted; it cannot be tolerated because it constitutes a permanent temptation for the population of Nicaragua."<sup>19</sup>

### El Salvador

The effects of revolution in Nicaragua have been repression and a pattern of human rights violations. The efforts of the terrorists in El Salvador have been equally disruptive. By their own admission, they have been responsible for thousands of deaths.

Shafik Jorge Handal, head of the Salvadoran Communist Party: "During these three years of war, the FMLN has inflicted over 15,000 casualties on the enemy armed forces. It has taken 2,350 prisoners."<sup>20</sup>

The guerrillas have also attacked the economy of El Salvador and have done so in a way that hurts the very people the FMLN



purports to represent. A communique from the Salvadoran private business association, reacting to the New Year's Eve destruction of the Cuscatlan bridge, read as follows:

"Although the destruction of this important bridge might be explained by its consideration as a military target, all the Salvadoran people will suffer the consequences."<sup>21</sup>

The Cuscatlan bridge joined eastern El Salvador to the rest of the country. A Salvadoran radio station had this to say about the rebels' action:

"We think that, after all, the people are the ones who in the long run will suffer the consequences of the rebel attack -- the large number of Salvadorans, the majority of them humble people, who need the Cuscatlan bridge."<sup>22</sup>

Besides imitating the death and destruction of their Nicaraguan neighbors, the Salvadoran guerrillas demonstrated a similar disdain for the use of free elections to determine the will of the people. Although they claimed to have no plans to repeat their 1982 tactic of trying to keep people from the polls, a rebel spokesman predicted ominously that "maybe some bridges will fall, or some traffic may be stopped."<sup>23</sup>

Salvadoran rebels made good this implied threat by destroying seven power stations the day before the voting, stealing citizens' Cedulas (I.D. cards) which they needed to vote, and patrolling the roads leading to polling places. These efforts, while costing the lives of 30 Salvadoran soldiers trying to protect the people, did not keep the people from voting in large numbers.

The rebels have called for negotiations towards the goal of power-sharing as a substitute for elections. Yet the following statement from Radio Venceremos, the guerrillas' clandestine radio station, casts some doubt on the usefulness of such negotiations:

"To ask that we disarm is tantamount to demanding that we surrender. They have failed to achieve this on the field of battle, and realize they will never be able to achieve it at the negotiations table."<sup>24</sup>

It would seem that the rebels are not willing to negotiate their right to continue armed struggle during or even after negotiations with the elected government.

#### PERCEPTION OF THE U.S. ROLE

The U.S. role in the region, contrary to some reports, is not viewed as a counterproductive or imperialistic presence. On the contrary, Francisco Quinonez Avila, presidential candidate for the Salvadoran Popular Party, said: "George Shultz comes to reinforce the democratization process that the Salvadoran people want and seek. His visit also supports the electoral



result that our people need: honest and clean elections."<sup>25</sup>

Senor Quinonez Avila was a member of the Salvadoran Peace Commission which met with representatives of the FMLN to try and get them to join the people of El Salvador in the electoral process.

The argument has been made that pressure from the U.S. to try and make Nicaragua keep the promises it made to the Organization of American States (OAS) is counterproductive and only serves to bolster Nicaraguan and international sympathy for the Sandinistas. However, La Nacion editor Ulibarri says:

"[T]here is no contradiction between pressuring the Sandinist government to change while providing military support for El Salvador. To the extent that the Sandinistas keep building a Marxist totalitarian society in Nicaragua, there will be a potential danger for the future of the area. No matter what the Sandinistas tell their erstwhile foreign listeners, Central Americans know this is true."<sup>26</sup>

Praise for the report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America was also forthcoming. President Luis Alvarado Monge of Costa Rica called the report: "an act of intervention against poverty and ignorance."<sup>27</sup>

A Panama City newspaper compared the role of the superpowers in the region:

"The hope for peace held out by U.S. President Ronald Reagan has not been matched by the Russians. We truly believe that President Reagan's words are both sincere and timely. But the Soviets will continue to play at war, given their incredible fate which is to impair peace."<sup>28</sup>

#### PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS

The people of Central America who do not have access to radio time or newspaper columns have nevertheless had their say as well. A recent public opinion poll was commissioned by the U.S. Information Agency and conducted by the Gallup affiliate CID in San Jose, San Salvador, Guatemala City, Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula.

Five hundred adults with at least one year of secondary school education were interviewed in the Costa Rican, Salvadoran and Guatemalan capitals and 700 interviews were conducted in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula.

The people surveyed live close to the turmoil in Central America, and what they say needs to be taken seriously. Results showed that the urban populations of all four countries are similar in their views about the conflict in El Salvador, and perhaps more importantly, their appraisal of the major actors.

Perceptions of Nicaragua, Cuba and the Soviet Union are predominantly negative. These countries are blamed more than any others for the problems faced in Central America. They are perceived almost exclusively as creating the conditions leading to war in Central America.

People in the survey cities were asked what country, if any, posed a military threat to their country. They were then asked if there was a second country that was also a threat. In San Jose, 69% of the sample said Nicaragua was a military threat to their country. Thirty-seven percent also mentioned Cuba. In Honduras, 80% cited Nicaragua as one of the two countries posing a military threat, and 38% cited Cuba. In San Salvador, Nicaragua was mentioned by 45% and Cuba by 37%.

When asked which two countries were most responsible for creating the conditions which bring war between countries in Central America, 72% of the Honduran sample cited Cuba, and 61% mentioned the Soviet Union. In San Jose, 50% blamed Cuba and 41% the Soviet Union. Cuba and the Soviet Union were mentioned by 54% of the San Salvador sample. By contrast, only 10% of the Hondurans and Salvadorans and 26% of the Costa Ricans mentioned the United States.

Cuba is seen as an instrument of the Soviet Union in the region, and as a threat to stability and peace. The percentages were 86% in Honduras, 71% in San Jose and 56% in El Salvador. Over 50% of the sample in all survey cities hold a negative image of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

A victory by the government forces in El Salvador is widely preferred over an insurgent victory. Over 80% of those surveyed in Honduras and 46% (a plurality) in Costa Rica held this view. Majorities (56% in San Jose, 67% in Tegucigalpa/San Pedro Sula and 60% in San Salvador) of those aware of U.S. military assistance to the government of El Salvador approve.

There is also widespread doubt about popular support for revolutionary forces. In San Salvador only 6% of the sample thought the insurgents had the support of a majority of the Salvadoran people. Almost ten times that number (58%) perceived them as merely a group of armed rebels.

Perceptions of the U.S. are, for the most part, positive. Although the United States is mentioned more than any other country as interfering in the internal affairs of survey countries, it is also most widely named as a country trying to solve the region's economic problems.

Twenty-nine percent (a plurality) of those surveyed in Tegucigalpa/San Pedro Sula and San Salvador cited the U.S. as a country that interferes too much in their country's internal affairs. However, 93% of the Honduran sample and 82% of the

Salvadoran believe the U.S. is helping solve their economic problems.

America is widely regarded as the government trying to maintain the stability of regional governments. In Honduras, this perception was especially strong -- 90% mentioned the U.S. when asked what country, if any, was trying to keep their nation stable. Over 80% of the Salvadorans and 72% of the Costa Rican sample agreed.

Moreover, many people in Central America look to the United States as a country that would come to their aid immediately if they were attacked. Ninety percent of the Hondurans and about two-thirds (67%) of the Costa Ricans felt this way.

#### CONCLUSION

This is but a small sample of statements in favor of genuine democracy and peaceful change in Central America. It is also but a small sample of Sandinista and rebel statements attacking these goals. The most ominous of these rebel statements was made by a FPL (Salvadoran) guerrilla quoted by a Copely news service reporter who spent 12 days with the guerrillas:

"The Mexicans should not think because they are helping us now, that they will escape revolution. We know who they are and after we have won in El Salvador and Guatemala we will give fraternal help to our Mexican revolutionary friends."<sup>29</sup>

#### ENDNOTES

1. Panama City ACAN 26 January 1984 (Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereinafter FBIS) 27 January 1984 p. P16)
2. RPC Television, Panama, 30 July 1983
3. Speech delivered at a Caracas conference sponsored by Enfoque magazine, 15 July 1983.
4. Panama City Circuito PRC Television 28 January 1984 (FBIS 31 January 1984 p. P7)
5. Enfoque speech, op. cit.
6. Speech at the Second Anniversary of the FSLM Triumph in Managua 19 July 1981.
7. Eduardo Ulibarri, "Cooking Up Solutions for Central American Problems," Wall Street Journal 17 February 1984 p. 31
8. New York magazine 12 September 1983.

9. Quoted in El Nuevo Diario 8 October 1983.
10. Eulogy at funeral services in Managua for FMLN Commander Ana Maria, 11 April 1983.
11. San Salvador Radio Cadena Sonora 26 December 1983 (FBIS 28 December 1983 p. P1)
12. Madrid EFE 22 December 1983 (FBIS 23 December 1983 p. P3)
13. Panama City Circuito PRC Television op. cit.
14. Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video 12 January 1984 (FBIS 13 January p. P11)
15. San Pedro Sula, El Tiempo 25 October 1983
16. Carl J. Migdail, "Nicaragua's Leftist Rulers - Defiant as Ever," U.S. News and World Report, 14 March, 1983 p. 29
17. San Jose La Nacion International 5 October 1983
18. Ibid.
19. Enfogue speech, op. cit.
20. Radio Venceremos 28 January 1984 (FBIS 30 January 1984 p. P11)
21. San Salvador El Diario de Hoy 5 January 1984 p. 13 (FBIS 6 January 1984 p. P3)
22. La Voz Panamericana 3 January 1984 (FBIS 5 January 1984 p. P9)
23. Madrid EFE 26 January 1984 (FBIS 26 January 1984 p. P3)
24. Radio Venceremos 1 January 1984
25. El Diario de Hoy 31 January 1984 p. 2
26. Ulibarri op. cit.
27. La Republica 17 January 1984 p. 2
28. Critica 19 January 1984 p. 4
29. New World (New York City) 19 March 1981

## WHAT THE SANDINISTAS SAY ABOUT SANDINISMO

By your words are you justified,  
and by your words are you condemned.  
Matthew 12:37

Arnaud deBorchgrave, speaking about Cuban and Soviet disinformation efforts in the United States, had this to say about the usefulness of the Cuban example:

"The Soviet calculation has been that while Russia itself has lost most of its ideological appeal to the left in Europe and the U.S., Cuba still retained a romantic, revolutionary image."

So it seems to be with the four-and-a-half-year-old Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua. In spite of widespread human rights violations, including the establishment of a "spy on your neighbor" system modeled on totalitarian Cuba, the Sandinistas are still widely perceived abroad as moderate reformers "forced into" draconian measures by a hostile United States.

One of the most persistent myths about Sandinismo is that it is merely leftist, not Marxist, and certainly not Marxist-Leninist. This myth has been challenged by studies comparing Sandinista actions to those of other Marxist-Leninist states. It has also been challenged, if not completely debunked, by statements of the Sandinistas themselves.



With posters such as this, the Sandinistas try to equate revolution with redemption.

Consider this statement by Humberto Ortega, Sandinista Defense Minister:

"...Marxism-Leninism is the scientific doctrine that guides our revolution, the instrument of analysis of our vanguard to understand the historical process and to create

the revolution; ... without Sandinismo we cannot be Marxist-Leninist and Sandinismo without Marxism-Leninism cannot be revolutionary, and because of that they are indissolubly united and because of that our moral strength is Sandinismo and our doctrine is that of Marxism-Leninism."<sup>2</sup>

Hugo Torres, of the general staff of the Sandinista Popular Army, also extolled the role of Marxism-Leninism when he said:

"The principles of Marxism-Leninism, wisely applied to the reality of our society, guided the revolutionary actions of the FSLN, the Nicaraguan people's vanguard, to victory over the dictatorship.... Lenin said that the people needed a vanguard in order to succeed and the Nicaraguan people succeeded because they had the FSLN."<sup>3</sup>

Victor Tirado, one of the nine Marxist-Leninist "comandantes" in the core of the Sandinista leadership, analyzed both the role of Marxism and the planned dominance of the FSLN:

"Our brilliant leader Carlos Fonseca taught us to: examine the country's economic structure to learn about the people's idiosyncrasies, psychology and feelings in order to arrive at solutions based on real facts, which is applying Marxism to our reality. This is why the FSLN outlined a government plan and prepared itself for predominant role in government .... As we all know, the efforts centered on the armed struggle, as this was the conclusion of the Marxist analysis."<sup>4</sup>

An unusual medium for a number of startling admissions by Sandinista leaders was an extensive interview with Tomas Borge, Nicaraguan Interior Minister and two of his colleagues in last September's Playboy. Borge told the interviewer:

"I told [my mother] that I would not be blackmailed by her gentleness and her naivete and that I was a Communist."<sup>5</sup>

This dedication to Marxism-Leninism has been a dominant strain in the Sandinista movement since its inception. Even before taking power, and at the same time that the FSLN was trying to hide its true nature and appear as part of a broad-based coalition, the element of Marxism-Leninism was clear. A 1978 Sandinista Boletin reads:

"This Sandinista nuclear vanguard must occupy and direct the governing organs.... This nucleus must base itself in the scientific doctrine of the proletariat, in Marxism-Leninism, as a sure guide for the transformation of society."

Miguel D'Escoto, who is Foreign Minister, and Ernesto Cardenal, Minister of Culture, are both Catholic priests. Nevertheless, they both speak positively of Marxism, a philosophy which is inherently atheistic.

In a May 1980 interview, D'Escoto described Marxism as "being one of the greatest blessings on the Church." Cardinal, a former student of Thomas Merton, said in an interview in Spain in 1978: "It may be said that the Gospel made me a Marxist. Marxism is the world's only solution."

Tomas Borge made the following comment on the relationship between Sandinismo and "true" belief:

"I sincerely believe that we Sandinistas respect Christ much more faithfully than do the sham Christians, the Pharisees and traitors to the cause and true thought of Jesus Christ."

The attempt to combine Marxism with Christianity, a frequent theme of Sandinista literature, culminated in the publication of "The Sandinista Creed," a parody of the Apostles' Creed, by a Nicaraguan professor in El Nuevo Diario, a strongly pro-government daily newspaper. (Full text attached) It reads in part:

"I believe in the Sandinista People's Revolution and in the wise political military guidance of our national leaders of the FSLN, who are working for the well-being of the Nicaraguan masses, who were once exploited and excluded and are fighting for peace in Central America.

"I believe in the doctrine and struggles of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Che, great teachers and leaders of the working class which is the productive, moving force behind the class struggle that will permanently destroy the exploitative, anti-Christian, and dehumanizing class.

"I believe in the construction of a socialist, Marxist and Leninist society. I believe in the immortality and veneration of our heroes and martyrs. I believe in the power of the people in the hands of workers and campesinos and in their existence until the end of time. Amen."

-MARX-  
1983-1983



"EL MAS GRANDE PENSADOR VIVIENTE"

A recent Sandinista first day cover was devoted to the hundredth anniversary of Karl Marx's death, hailing him as "The Greatest Living Thinker."



Besides seeking to deny the Marxist-Leninist nature of the regime, apologists for Sandinismo also contend that the regime is not supporting terrorism in other countries and that its massive arms buildup since 1979 is due to U.S. pressure and hostility.

This theory not only fails to take into account the fact that the buildup began while the U.S. was sending almost \$120 million in aid but also ignores the U.S. medical teams who treated over 5,000 people in the Atlantic Coast region.

More importantly, arguing that Sandinismo is not expansionist also means arguing with the statements of the Sandinistas themselves. In spite of concrete proof the Sandinistas have supported terrorists in neighboring countries, the Sandinista leadership has frequently denied exporting revolution but the following statements document the fervor of Sandinista support for insurgents elsewhere.

Tomas Borge, on the second anniversary of the Sandinista victory, denied exporting revolution but included this sentiment in a Managua speech:

"This Revolution goes beyond our borders. Our revolution was always internationalist from the moment Sandino fought in La Segovia."

Borge was lauding the participation of foreigners in the Sandinista victory and later in the same speech expressed his moral support for "revolutionary" movements in other parts of Central America.

Michael Kramer, writing in the September 12, 1983 edition of New York magazine, quoted two prominent Sandinistas:

Bayardo Arce: "We will never give up supporting our brothers in El Salvador."

Humberto Ortega: "Of course we are not ashamed to be helping El Salvador. We would like to help all revolutions."

As early as May 1980, again well before the U.S. government ended its assistance to the Sandinista regime, no less an authority than Foreign Minister D'Escoto said:

"You [the U.S.] may look at us as five countries, six now with Panama, but we regard ourselves as six different states of a single nation, in the process of reunification."

Even more outspoken than D'Escoto on this issue is Tomas Borge, who was quoted as saying: "Costa Rica is the dessert,"<sup>10</sup> meaning, no doubt, that the fall of this unarmed democracy would be the culmination of D'Escoto's "reunification."

Borge told a North Korean audience in June 1980 that "the Nicaraguan revolutionaries will not be content until the imperialists have been overthrown in all parts of the world .. We stand with the forces of peace in progress,

which are the Socialist countries."

More recently, the Playboy interviewer asked Borge to respond to the remark that since the revolution triumphed in Nicaragua, "it will be exported to El Salvador, then Guatemala, then Honduras, then Mexico?" Borge's response: "That is one historical prophecy of Ronald Reagan's that is absolutely true!"<sup>11</sup>

The Sandinistas promise to hold an election this year, but obviously intend to limit the choices available to the Nicaraguan people.

As early as 1981 Humberto Ortega made the comment: "Keep firmly in your minds that these elections are to consolidate revolutionary power, not to place it at stake."<sup>12</sup> He reiterated this view in 1983 when he said that the Nicaraguan people had already had their election in the revolution and had chosen the FSLN.

Sergio Ramirez, a member of the three man coordinating junta, had this to say about elections:

"The Nicaraguan people will have to choose and vote for one candidate. That candidate is the revolution. This is very important." He later added: "It is a question of which parties have the most responsible programs and who can really guarantee the people they will go ahead with the revolutionary process."<sup>13</sup>

In spite of the best efforts of the Marxist-Leninist leadership to convince North Americans that theirs is a moderate, non-Communist and non-threatening revolution, their own words show clearly what their beliefs are and what their aims are. Skeptics do not have to listen to the critics of Sandinismo; they have only to listen to its leaders.

FOOTNOTES

1. Speech to the Outreach Working Group on Wednesday 7 March 1983.
2. Speech to the Sandinista military, quoted by Branko Lazitch in Est et Ouest (Paris) 25 August, 1981
3. Managua Domestic Service 23 April, 1982. (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, hereinafter FBIS, 28 April, 1982 p. P9)
4. Managua Radio Sandino 26 February, 1983 (FBIS 28 February, 1983 p. P17)
5. Playboy September, 1983 p. 60
6. "Nicaragua and the World," Christianity and Crisis 12 May, 1980 p. 141
7. Government of Nicaragua's 1983 report to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, p. 107, para. 525
8. Dionisio Herrera y Canales, El Nuevo Diario 7 January, 1983 (The article appeared on the editorial page) (Emphasis added)
9. "Nicaragua and the World," op. cit.
10. Huber Matos, "Borge's Hunger for a Costa Rican 'Dessert'," Wall Street Journal 2 December 1983.
11. Playboy, op. cit. p. 192
12. Henri Weber, Nicaragua: the Sandinist Revolution, (London, U.K.: Verso Editions, 1981) p. 118
13. Managua Domestic Service, 14 January, 1984 (FBIS 16 January, 1984 p. P20-21)

## THE SANDINISTA CREED

I believe in Sandino, the Father of our people's anti-imperialist revolution, who was born of a proletarian campesino mother and descended from the line of Dirianquen, Estrada, Castro, and Zeledon. He was a proletarian with a strong conscience, self-educated, a patriot and a nationalist, anti-imperialist, and internationalist warrior, like David who slew Goliath.

I believe in Sandino, the organizer of the E.D.S.N., made up of workers and campesinos, who fought in the mountains, valleys, towns and cities against the traitors who sold their country and against the gringo imperial legions in the defense of our native soil, our sovereignty, and our national honor.

He was betrayed and assassinated by a Judas, the stepson of Uncle Sam, who repaid him with years of military dictatorship and dollars. His murderers and the desecrators of his corpse were granted amnesty through the complicity of a Liberal-Conservative Congress.

I believe in Carlos Fonseca, his beloved Son, who inherited his ideals and guerrilla warfare tactics, who was the Founder of the FSLN, our political military vanguard, who is placed on the altar of his country beside his revolutionary Father, whose ideology he enriched with new revolutionary philosophy, a proletarian in nature, which he transmitted to his close comrades-in-arms.

I believe in the Sandinista People's Revolution and the wise political-military guidance of our national leaders of the FSLN, who are working for the well-being of the Nicaraguan masses, who were once exploited and excluded and are fighting for peace in Central America.

I believe in the doctrines and struggles of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Che, great teachers and leaders of the working class, which is the productive and moving force behind the class struggle that will permanently destroy the exploitative, anti-Christian, and dehumanizing class.

I believe in the construction of a socialist, Marxist and Leninist society. I believe in the immortality and veneration of our heroes and martyrs. I believe in the power of the people in the hands of the workers and campesinos and in their existence until the end of time. Amen.

## **SANDINISTA REPRESSION OF TRADE UNION AND EMPLOYER GROUPS**

### **Introduction**

After nearly five years, the Sandinistas have repressed nearly every sector of Nicaraguan society, including those which helped it to overthrow the Somoza dictatorship in 1979. The Sandinistas have been particularly harsh toward the Miskito Indians, forcing at least 25,000 into exile, and relocating 10,000 to the interior of Nicaragua.

Independent human rights groups have documented cases of disappearances, killings, and torture involving Nicaraguan security forces. (1) Strong indications suggest that the Sandinistas have assassinated and kidnapped some of their opponents whether inside or outside of Nicaragua. Examples: the murders of Commander Bravo in Honduras, Jorge Salazar in Managua, Hector Frances in Costa Rica and Anastasio Somoza in Paraguay.

Many Nicaraguans who have refused to bow to Sandinista rule have been harassed, arrested and, in some cases, tortured. Some have lost jobs, and others are unable to obtain ration cards. Civil liberties have been progressively contained, the press is censored, the rights to assembly and habeas corpus are suspended. In short, Nicaraguans today enjoy restricted human, civil and political rights.

It should thus come as no surprise that the Sandinistas have also repressed the two progressive forces of trade unions and the private sector. Criticism of Sandinista repression of labor and employer groups, as it has become more and more heavy-handed, has sparked concern on the part of Amnesty International and the International Labor Organization.

### **Nicaraguan Labor Violations**

The International Labor Organization (ILO) has repeatedly criticized Nicaragua's failure to uphold international freedom of association standards. A minimum of twelve complaints have been submitted by both labor and employer organizations against the Nicaraguan Government since 1980.

The ILO's special committee on Freedom of Association has concluded in virtually all cases that the murders, arrests and detentions, as well as numerous legislative restrictions on civil and labor rights, violate international standards..

In addition, the ILO's annual International Labor Conference has become increasingly adamant in its criticism of Nicaragua's violation of freedom of association. The 1982 Conference fell short of public condemnation after the Sandinistas agreed to cooperate and seek assistance from the ILO.

When the Conference convened in June, 1983, however, no assistance had actually been sought. The Conference subsequently publicly highlighted for the first time the case of Nicaragua, and under much pressure, the government requested formal assistance from the ILO.

The ILO commission on Freedom of Association visited Nicaragua in December, 1983, and its findings were discussed at the Governing Body meeting in February. They will also be reviewed at the next ILO Conference in June, 1984. (2)

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), officially protested to the Nicaraguan government on December 18, 1981, concerning restrictions placed on the attendance at a union training course given by the International Center for Advanced Vocational Training in Turin, Italy.

One candidate was selected from the government-controlled Sandinista Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers (CST), and one from the Confederation of Trade Union Unity (CUS), an independent free trade union. The CST candidate was approved, but the Nicaraguan government denied permission to the representative of the CUS.

The government dismissed the incident as a bureaucratic mistake -- the candidates had not cleared exit permits with the Ministry of Planning, they said -- and neither candidate went. (3)

Since the creation of the Sandinista-controlled union, CUS has come under attack, and its members have been repeatedly harassed. Members of the CST have been rewarded for their loyalty. As a result it is increasingly difficult for the independent CUS to survive as a free trade union. (4)

As estimated 200 members of the Central de Trabajadores de Nicaragua (CTN), a trade union federation affiliated with the Christian Democratic Confederacion Latinoamericana de Trabajadores (CLAT), were reported detained for questioning between June, 1981 and December, 1982.

Some trade union leaders have in a number of cases been repeatedly detained. Juan Rafael Suazo, president of the union of workers at Managua cooking oil factories (Sindicato de la Industria Aceitera de Managua, or SITRIAM), an affiliate of the CTN, was detained for several days in March, 1982 and again in April, 1982.

The charges were not brought before a court and this in itself justifies questioning whether the arrests represent a pattern of harassment or intimidation.

On November 7, 1982, Alejandro Amero and Dennis Maltes Lugo, social welfare secretary and treasurer respectively of the dockworkers' union of the Pacific Coast of Corinto (Sindicato de

Estibadores del Puerto de Corinto), were detained on unspecified charges under Public Order Law, (Decree no. 5 of July 20, 1979).

Alejandro Amero was held in detention for a two week period, following which he was released. At the time of his release, the case was still in the interrogation stage.

Dennis Maltes Lugo was detained for a period of five weeks following which charges were dropped and he was subsequently released. Other members of the Dockworkers' Union, who have reportedly been detained for short periods of time, have, in the past, been the subject of repeated appeals by Amnesty International. (5) The ICFTU also issued a statement calling for the release of the imprisoned dock workers.

On May 5, 1983, 18 individuals, most of them leaders of the CTN, were detained. While little information is available in the legal situation of the 18 prisoners, all were reportedly detained under the Law for the Maintenance of Public Order and Security; some were reportedly charged under this law with having sabotaged or obstructed production in their work places.

Amnesty is concerned that the 18 may have been detained solely because of their leadership positions in the national trade federation, the CTN. Although some are believed to have been released, those still in detention have been charged under Public Order Law for various crimes, among them sabotage and obstructing production. (6)

In the course of 1982 Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have noted few cases of either convictions or lengthy sentences under the Public Order Law clauses restricting the freedom of expression, trade union organization, and the non-violent activities of political parties.

Most prisoners detained in relation to trade union, political party, or other activity not involving violence or the advocacy of violence have been held for relatively short periods, and released before trial proceedings have begun.

In this regard, however, Amnesty International is concerned at what appears to be a pattern of harassment and intimidation through short-term but arbitrary imprisonment of supporters of lawful opposition, trade union, and other groups. (7)

Some of these arrests are clearly arbitrary. The pattern of these arrests appears to represent a practice intended to intimidate members or potential members or supporters of independent trade unions, political parties, or other non-violent organizations that are considered a potential challenge to current government policies.

Throughout 1982 and continuing through mid-1983, members of organizations that have challenged government policies have been



subject to frequent short-term arrest and routine questioning in a pattern of obvious harassment and intimidation. (8)

One particularly disturbing example of harassment was a recent Barricada (the official Sandinista newspaper) article labeling Alvin Guthrie, the leader of an independent labor confederation, a "counterrevolutionary." With the story was a cartoon, drawn by a state cartoonist, depicting Guthrie, who is black, with a bone tied to the top of his head. (9)

On a recent visit to the U.S., Victor Espinoza, Legal Counsel to the CTN, stated that the CTN wants Nicaragua to return to the three promised components of the original Sandinista plan: political pluralism, a mixed economy, and non-alignment with any superpower. Since this has not been done, however, the CTN has refused to join the official Sandinista government labor organization.

CTN leaders say that as a result, members of their union are the first to be fired by state-owned companies, are frequently harassed, and arbitrarily arrested. Close to thirty of their members are currently in prison. (10)

Nicaragua's independent Standing Committee on Human Rights (CPDH), for years a vociferous critic of human rights abuses by Somoza, assessed the position of workers in their latest annual report:

"In summarizing what has happened in the field of labor in 1983, we must regard the situation from two standpoints. On one hand, we must examine the situation of independent labor organizations subjected to constant defamatory publicity, whose members have had to deal with a variety of problems. On the other, we must consider a violation of labor rights that is suffered by all labor organizations, that is, the fact that Nicaragua does not allow strikes.

"Although the government of Nicaragua has signed international agreements guaranteeing freedom for labor associations, complaints of labor repression were constantly being filed with CPDH offices in Nicaragua in 1983: arrests, threats of capture, harassment, "mob" attacks and dismissals at every level in the independent unions placed a heavy burden on these organizations in 1983." (11)

The rural sector has suffered most, according to the report. It cites "detention -- in most cases from 3 to 6 months -- and constant pressure and harassment to abandon the ranks of the labor union or become informers for State Security."

Urban workers fare little better. The report continues:

"Among city workers affiliated with independent labor unions repression includes being summoned for interviews in which the worker is forced to sign 'pledges of cooperation' and of 'defense of the revolutionary process'. Detention under such charges such as 'disrespect for authority' or

'boycotting production.' In most cases, once the workers are released, they find they have lost their jobs. ... The number of violations of labor freedoms increased in 1983." (12)

### Surrender to the State

In Communist countries throughout the world, trade unions serve not to advance the interests of the workers, but to serve the political interests of the rulers. They serve not to organize strikes but to forbid them; not to improve the wages and benefits but to restrain them; not to bargain collectively on behalf of the workers but to organize the collective submission of the workers to their employers -- the State.

This same path is being pursued by the new Communist leadership of Nicaragua. The primary purpose of labor unions in today's Nicaragua is to assist in the forced transformation of society along the lines determined by the Sandinista leadership.

Sandinista violations of workers' rights even includes requiring workers to participate in all-night work details, according to Benjamin Lanzas, a leader of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP). He said:

"After working all day the people are 'volunteered' for special midnight to 5 a.m. neighborhood work details. If they refuse, they are hounded by the turbas, or mobs, organized by the neighborhood Sandinist spies, the CDS (Comites de Defensa Sandinista). These turbas then terrorize the worker's family, destroy the worker's property, and the worker is often denied his food ration card unless he is willing to repent." (13)

Existing independent trade unions are being harassed, their members blacklisted, threatened and sometimes jailed. Most of the unions and most of the union members in the country have been forced into Sandinista labor confederations subservient to the government.

These confederations have supported the Nicaraguan government's ban on strikes, collaborating in the destruction of organized labor's most potent weapon. Collective bargaining has become a farce. (14)

### The AIFLD Episode: 1979-1981

Soon after their takeover of Nicaragua in 1979, the FSLN became increasingly critical of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) presence in Nicaragua and of democratic unions such as the CUS, an affiliate of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

It publicized in the press (various articles in Barricada) that the AIFLD operation was a CIA front, whose employees were posing as trade unionists while seeking to undermine the revolution. Sandinista efforts to discredit AIFLD personnel and programs as well as threats against the CUS leaders eventually culminated in the closing of the AIFLD office. Much of the CUS leadership is now in exile.

The CUS and other democratic unions continue to be harassed to this day. The AIFLD office and its personnel in Managua were under constant surveillance; telephones were tapped; and occasional, illegal searches and break-ins were carried out after hours at the AIFLD office. Equipment and documents were stolen during the break-ins and the contents of the documents were later printed in Barricada.

The AIFLD had established a revolving fund for campesino seminars from which the campesinos could receive a no-interest loan for their planting season to be repaid at harvest time. After the loans were made, the Sandinistas threatened the borrowers, persuading them not to honor their debts, and eventually the revolving fund was bankrupt.

In addition to public harassment directed at AIFLD and other democratic unions, the Sandinistas enlisted the support of their newly created government labor federation, the CST. The CST is affiliated with the Communist World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), an organization headed by the iron curtain countries and Cuba, headquartered in Prague.

This was followed by a Sandinista order preventing the AIFLD country director from physically operating out of his office. In addition to isolating him from his staff, his passport was also confiscated for a period of approximately three months. Exit and entry visas were denied to prohibit his travel to regional labor meetings and to the U.S.

Unable to carry out effectively a program of training and agricultural development for campesino unions, the AIFLD director was withdrawn and the office was finally closed in 1981.

The official repression carried out in the press, and through Sandinista trade unions affiliated with the CST, foreclosed U.S. opportunities to cooperate with democratic unions in Nicaragua. At no time were any charges against AIFLD proven, nor was the Sandinista campaign of harassment ever embraced by the CUS or other democratic unions familiar with the AIFLD program in Nicaragua.

A personal appeal to Sandinista leaders by the AIFLD director to discuss the aims and objectives of the AIFLD union-to-union program in Nicaragua went unanswered. The Sandinista efforts to discredit AIFLD/U.S. forms of technical assistance on

a union-to-union basis in Nicaragua were nothing more than a pretext for hostile actions against the U.S.

Moreover, these actions were inconsistent with the claimed Sandinista policy of promoting free and democratic institutions in the aftermath of the Somoza rule. Further evidence of their actual policy of opposition to free unions is seen in the Sandinista persecution of the Nicaraguan Workers Central, a non-Sandinista labor confederation, supported by the World Confederation of Labor (made up of European Christian trade unions) and its regional organization, CLAT.

#### Repression of the Business Sector

Nicaragua's private sector, organized under an umbrella organization known as the Superior Council for Private Enterprise (COSEP), has frequently complained that the radical policies pursued by the Sandinistas have created a lack of confidence in the country's political and economic future, elements vital for private investment.

For such criticism, members of the Nicaraguan business community, who played an essential role in overthrowing Somoza's government through its "crippling strikes," have been portrayed as "counterrevolutionaries," exploiting the masses. Because of this, they have been persecuted by the Sandinista security forces.

This persecution includes the assassination of the vice president of COSEP, Jorge Salazar, who was shot to death by government security forces minutes after a staged "arms transfer." The government justified the murder by calling him a "counterrevolutionary," even though it admitted he was unarmed at the time of his death.

Since this incident, thousands of businessmen, technicians, and professionals have fled Nicaragua. Understandably, businesses have suffered dramatic decreases in productivity. (15)

On October 20, 1981, COSEP published an open letter criticizing Humberto Ortega's statement that the Sandinista government could "in a matter of hours," take over everything that "the bourgeoisie still possesses." The letter accused the government of egregious economic mismanagement, and the Sandinista doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, for the country's deepening economic crisis. (16)

The Sandinista government quickly reacted to this letter: by midnight of the same day, state security forces arrested four COSEP leaders in their homes for "violation of the economic and social emergency law."

Three of those arrested were sentenced to seven months in jail on October 30. They were Enrique Dreyfus, President of

COSEP, Benjamin Lanzas, President of the Chamber of Construction, and Gilberto Cuadra, President of the Federation of Nicaraguan Professionals.

Similar sentences were handed down to three other businessmen who fled into exile in Venezuela and the U.S. This left the private sector in Nicaragua leaderless, and with few anti-Sandinistas willing to assume such a risky role. Under continued international pressure, the Sandinistas finally released the COSEP leaders on February 14. Daniel Ortega called together the business executives to announce that the sentences had been commuted. (17)

In February and October 1982, the International Organization of Employers (IOE), filed complaints charging the government of Nicaragua detained Enrique Bolanos Gayer, acting Chairman of COSEP, to prevent his participation in a joint economic forum between the governments of Nicaragua and Venezuela.

Also restricted or detained were Enrique Dreyfus, Ismael Reyes, Vice-Chairman of COSEP, William Baez, Assistant Director of the Nicaraguan Development Institute, Rosendo Diaz, Executive Secretary of the Union of Agricultural Producers, and Alejandro Burgos, Executive Director of COSEP. (18)

The Nicaraguan government denied the charges and Dreyfus and his associates were later arrested. Many labor and private enterprise representatives are now in exile, due to restrictions by the Sandinista regime. (19)

The Sandinista regime continued its repressive tactics against COSEP's representation of the private sector in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas agreed only reluctantly to free employer representation at the International Labor Conference of the ILO, where employers, workers and governments meet to formulate new labor standards and to review labor rights violations. (20)

Following pressure from the International Organization of Employers, the Sandinista government finally permitted Ismael Reyes to attend the 1983 ILO Conference. However, once at the Conference, Reyes learned that his son had been arrested by State Security agents and that two of his businesses had been confiscated by the government during his absence.

Reyes left the Conference without being able to participate in key discussions on Nicaragua's violation of international labor standards. Some speculated that the Sandinista government learned that Reyes planned to speak out against the government's violation of freedom of association and therefore, retaliated by arresting Reyes' son and confiscating his businesses. (21)

### Mechanisms of Control and Repression

Under the law for the Maintenance of Public Order and Security (Decree No. 5 of July 20, 1979), a wide range of offenses allegedly related to national security are punishable by imprisonment. (22)

On March 15, 1982, a State of Emergency was declared in Nicaragua and some civil rights and guarantees were suspended. The State of Emergency, equivalent to a state of siege, replaced the State of Economic and Social Emergency that had been in force since September 9, 1981, and made punishable acts considered to undermine the national economy, elaborating on provisions to that effect already included in the Public Order Law.

Under the September 9, 1981 measure, the right to strike had been suspended and dissemination considered damaging to the economy had been made punishable by imprisonment. The March, 1982 State of Emergency retained these provisions and among other measures, ordered a halt to certain activities of political parties and provided for prior censorship of the news media.

Under the State of Economic Emergency, censorship had been exercised through the threat of imprisonment of persons responsible for the publication or broadcasting of news or information considered damaging to the economy and the threat of closure of the newspaper or radio station in question. (23)

There has been apparently systematic censorship from the news media of material concerning human rights issues inside Nicaragua, including reports produced by domestic Nicaraguan human rights, church, trade union, or political organizations regarding human rights abuses.

Some of the prisoners detained under the Public Order Law, both before and after the declaration of the State of Emergency, have been prosecuted solely as a result of their active membership in lawful trade unions or business associations, in human rights groups, or in political party organizations in conflict with or critical of the government. (24)

### Conclusion

Human rights abuses, including persecution of trade union and business groups by the Sandinista regime, are clearly arbitrary. The pattern of arrests appears to represent a practice intended to intimidate members or potential members or supporters in independent trade unions, and business associations that are considered to challenge current government policies.

The Sandinista Revolution, while originally promising to bring all Nicaraguans into a pluralistic society has, in fact, singled out these same pluralistic institutions such as trade



union and employer groups, and subjected them to the controls of a police state.

Endnotes

1. See also New York Times, March 5, 1981 p. 2A, in which Nicaraguan officials are quoted admitting to the summary execution of hundreds of prisoners after the Sandinista "Triumph."
2. Bureau of International Labor Affairs, January, 1984
3. Richard Araujo, "The Sandinista War on Human Rights," Heritage Foundation Backgrounders, no. 277 July 19, 1983
4. Ibid.
5. Statement by Amnesty International before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, U.S. House of Representatives, September 15, 1983 pp. 4-6
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Chris Hedges, "To get ahead in Nicaragua, be a Sandinista," Christian Science Monitor November 25, 1983 p. 11
10. Victor Espinoza, interview with the Voice of America December 8, 1983
11. Comision Permanente de Derechos Humanos de Nicaragua (Standing Committee on Human Rights of Nicaragua) Annual Report 1983. (Emphasis added)
12. Ibid.
13. David Assman, "Are Sandinist Changes for Real?" The Wall Street Journal, December 9, 1983 p. 30
14. The Permanent Committee for Nicaraguan Human Rights: "A Union Report on Nicaragua"
15. "The Sandinista War," op. cit.
16. Richard Araujo, "The Nicaraguan Connection: A Threat to Central America," Heritage Foundation Backgrounders no. 168, February 24, 1982
17. Ibid.



18. "The Sandinista War," op. cit.
19. Ibid.
20. Bureau of International Labor Affairs, January, 1984
21. Ibid.
22. Amnesty International, op. cit.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.

29

**WASHFAX RECEIPT**

THE WHITE HOUSE

**C**

MAY 24 9 54 AM '84

**A**

MESSAGE NO. 969 CLASSIFICATION UNCLAS PAGES 29  
 FROM R. KIMMITT  
 (NAME) (EXTENSION) (ROOM NUMBER)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION THREE W/H DIGESTS

TO (AGENCY)	DELIVER TO:	DEPT/ROOM NO.	EXTENSION
<u>BRAVO</u>	<u>CHARLES HILL</u>		
<u>DELTA</u>	<u>JOHN STANFORD</u>		
<u>ALPHA</u>			STAT

REMARKS \_\_\_\_\_